

Fact Sheet: Proposed Illinois Bottle Bill

Prepared by the Office of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, relying on data from IL EPA, and as noted

Why focus on beverage containers?

- They are often consumed away from home (and thus are much less likely to be recycled through curbside programs).
- They make up 40 – 60% of all litter.
- Their production consumes an enormous amount of energy.

Where have bottle bills been successful?

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|---------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| • California | • Hawaii | • Massachusetts | • Oregon |
| • Connecticut | • Iowa | • Michigan | • Vermont |
| • Delaware | • Maine | • New York | |

Bottle Bill Benefits

• ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- **Litter** - A bottle bill will greatly reduce litter, keeping our streets, roads, parks and beaches beautiful. (In states with bottle bills, beverage container litter has been reduced 70-80% and total litter has been reduced 35-40%.)
 - Over the past twenty years (from the time the bottle bill was first passed), New York has diverted more than 75 billion bottles and cans from its waste stream, virtually all of which have been recycled (NYPIRG).
- **Landfills** - A bottle bill will reduce the need for more landfills, lowering property taxes and improving quality of life.
 - Number of beverage bottles and cans that have been landfilled, littered or incinerated in the U.S. so far this year: **39,042,069,797** (Container Recycling Institute). Without a bottle bill, Illinois wastes almost 500,000 tons of beverage containers per year.
- **Greenhouse gas/oil** - Since the passage of their bottle bill, New Yorkers have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 4 million tons, and saved the energy equivalent of 25 million barrels of oil — enough energy to provide electricity to all the homes in New York City for one year (NYPIRG).
- **Energy** – If 70% of the beverage containers consumed in Illinois were recycled (which is a typical rate for bottle bill states), we could save over 3 million megawatt-hours of energy. This is equivalent to taking over 100,000 households off the grid.
- **Farm/Rural Issues** - Farm Bureaus are some of the biggest supporters of existing bottle bills because litter on farms accounts for feed contamination, equipment damage and livestock deaths that cost, on average, \$938 per farm per year. Bottle bills decrease litter and reduce this costly damage.

• ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Bottle bills have had no reported effect on beverage sales in the states where they exist.
- **Redemption centers** - Bottle bills have been proven to be business revenue generators. Businesses profit from the sale of recycled scrap material in the enhanced recycling industry facilitated by bottle bills. They can also profit by investing the deposit money they receive upfront from dealers in short-term gains operations, collecting interest or other revenue on it before paying it out to the State when deposits are claimed by consumers.
- **Low-income individuals** - gathering unredeemed cans/bottles can be a source of income.
- **Jobs** - Bottle bills create jobs. The explanation is simple: People are needed to collect and process bottles. Bottle bill job results:
 - MA has added 1,800 jobs
 - NY has added 3,800 jobs
 - MI has added 4,600 jobs
 - **No state has reported a net job loss as a result of a bottle bill**

• RECYCLING RATES

- Though overall container recycling rates have declined nationally—despite the increase in curbside recycling programs—bottle bills have been proven to increase recycling, and more people in bottle bill states have access to curbside recycling than those in states without bottle bills. In states with bottle bills, beverage container recycling rates are over *double* those in states with curbside recycling only. Furthermore, bottle bills can significantly decrease the costs of curbside and other recycling programs by decreasing the volume of beverage containers processed by municipal agencies.

For more information, visit CleanWater.il.gov.